531 on a large amount of material including 4,700
796 colored ornaments and samples which he had collected
in the whole area of European Russia and East Germany as far as the Riesengebirge. The egg is indeed celebrated by many peoples as the symbol of awakening life in nature. The custom of artistically painting Easter eggs is known not only in Lithuania but also in other countries, above all in Poland, and probably the Lithuanians took it over from the Poles but developed it further in their own way.

/135/According to the investigations of Daugirdas, the Lithuanian Easter eggs, the most beautiful examples of which are to be found along the central and lower course of the Memel as far as Schmalleningken, differ from the Polish primarily in their calmer colors. On these subdued colors the decorative drawing frequently has an especially beautiful effect. The eggs are cooked, dipped in the coloring--plant colorings are used--and the pattern is scratched in. In contrast to this the Poles paint the projected pattern on the raw egg with fluid wax, and employ for this a little wooden stick which is split at the end and provided with a little narrow metal tube. The eggs are dipped into a lighter, cold coloring solution. They are called pisanki. After drying, wax is again applied to the spots which are to remain lighter, and the egg is dipped into a darker coloring solution. This process is repeated various times with darker and darker colors, so that the egg finally obtains the most varied color patterns and ornaments. At the end the egg is cooked and the layer of wax is dissolved. The Lithuanians employ this process less often, and usually only with two colors.

"The making of the margučiai," says Daugirdas, "is almost exclusively the work and artistic province of the Lithuanian girl, more seldom of the married woman. The eggs are colored on Easter

531 Saturday, but not scratched until Sunday afternoon;
796 making them earlier is considered a sin." The Lithuanian Easter eggs, too, are hardly ever sold in the market. They are gifts of the godparents or the mother for the children and tokens for friends and for the clergy of the town. While the neighboring Letts know only eggs of one color, the Lithuanian margučiai are already attested in the sixteenth century. At the present time the old custom has remained alive primarily in the district of Trakai.

286 Weaving and Related Techniques

That Lithuanian folk art--we may think of the folk song or of the grave crosses, or of any branch at all--forms a unity in its innermost nature and /136/ has created an artistic style of its own, has been pointed out by many critics. The sphere of this art comprises the whole life of a rural culture with a rare compactness; one thing is related to the other, and as the last field, the village art of weaving harmoniously joins this circle.

Flax, harvested in one's own field, spun on one's own spinning wheel, woven on a peasant loom, has been a familiar material in Lithuania since very olden times. Connected with its processing was the song, whose rhythm followed the movement of the loom, and whose words extolled the weavers who knew how to weave fine patterns. Thus in this art there is nothing foreign; it does not rest in the hands of a few--every girl, every woman in the villages still knows it today. And old women still know today that ancient art of spinning where the flax wrapped around a distaff is spun off with the aid of a spindle which the spinner turns with her hand.

286 The colors, too, with which the threads
386 were dyed, were originally quite natural. They were produced from earth, iron ore, plants, birch

793 from a clairvoyant vision, they mediated the disclosures of the de-
771 ceased, convoked the people for gatherings, when such revelations had been received, in order to make them known, in order to arrange festivals, and in order to determine the sowing and the harvesting time. The priests were, therefore, the spiritual leaders of the people, who guided life into its everyday activities from the vantage point of their knowledge of the cosmic interconnections. They were acquainted with the influence of the moon on all births and with the return of the souls after death into its sphere: "that which has died off, which is laid as a seed kernel into the soil of another world," as Creuzer expresses it; an insight, it would appear, into the process of every re-
[796] newed life on earth. A special festival in autumn, the festival of the consecration of the goat, seems to have been an exoteric parallel to the initiation rites in the mystery cults; for on this occasion the priests recited the traditions from the history of the people and absolved the
[821] people of sin. After the harvest a god's image was every year broken and renovated; by this was expressed the experience that the spiritual forces of the cosmos turn towards and away from the earth in the rhythm of the year, and that in winter they collect themselves, renew themselves, in order to be able to come streaming to the growing plant world in the spring. Present-day harvest practices are the final dying echoes of such knowledge of the spiritual forces, vivifying and emanating, that permeate the world and all its parts.

113 Bibliography, etc.

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/33: Illustrations./